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# Navy Medicine’s Role in Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

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This year’s Sexual Assault Awareness Months’ slogan, “Live Our Values: Step Up to Stop Sexual Assault,” truly embodies the Armed Forces role in curtailing these events.

Navy Medicine has led the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) program this year. The Navy Surgeon General, Vice Adm. Matthew Nathan, provided course direction to ensure sexual assault victims could get a Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE) on any ship, in garrison, hospital, or clinic at any hour of the day.

The past year also brought forth the inception of “[Real Talk. No Rank.](#)” gender-oriented discussion groups that focus on sexual assault and other topics Sailors are concerned about. Two different approaches, two different objectives, both with one goal: preventing and responding to sexual assault.


“Real Talk, No Rank” gained traction at [Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, Va.](#) (NMCP), and quickly spread to other bases in Hampton Roads. The discussions often have a common theme – decision making. These continuing group discussions focus on the decisions Sailors make and the turn of events that can occur when a series of decisions are made. The groups strive to empower individuals in good decision-making skills, and provide a sounding board for individuals to communicate alternatives to bad decisions.


The Navy Medicine East Region, responsible for the naval medical treatment facilities (MTFs) in Europe, the Caribbean, and the Eastern United States (Massachusetts to Texas), has 61


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facilities capable of providing SAFE exams. These facilities provide direct support to the fleet, administering SAFE exams to Sailors, Soldiers, Marines, Airmen and their families, when needed.

At NMCP, there are nine examiners: two nurse practitioners, one physician assistant and six registered nurses. NMCP is also one of the few MTFs that include enlisted in the exam process and have more than a dozen staff corpsmen who assist.

The Portsmouth program is on the forefront and produced five nationally certified Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner-Adults/Adolescents (SANE-A) expert examiners, setting the bar for all of the Department of Defense.

While the focus is not merely responding to sexual assault, Navy Medicine is charging forward in prevention efforts with engaging programs that cultivate Sailor-to-Sailor solutions.

Navy Medicine’s forward-leaning position on sexual assault is the result of Sailors taking care of Sailors. These professionals have stepped up to stop sexual assault by answer the call to prevent and respond to sexual assault through these initiatives every day. Stopping sexual assault, whether prevention through group discussion or responding to a sexual assault when conducting a SAFE exam; Navy Medicine lives the Navy Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment.

For sexual assault resources, please visit:

- Visit [safehelpline.org](https://www.safehelpline.org) (for service members) to receive live, one-on-one confidential help with a trained professionals through a secure instant-messaging format.
- Call 1-877-995-5247 to speak with Safe Helpline staff for personalized advice and support.
- Text your location to 55247 inside the United States or 202-470-5546 outside of the United States to receive automated contact information for the sexual assault response coordinator at your installation or base. A sexual assault victim advocate may be assigned to assist you.

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network:

- Visit <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/> for free, confidential and secure help that is just a click away.
- Call 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) to speak with trained, professional counselors for advice or support.

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